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profits of agriculture and commerce diverted the energies of the people from manufactures to those pursuits. After the embargo renewed impetus was given to manufacturing. But it is a mistake to treat the whole period from 1790 to 1810 as a unit. It is also questionable whether it was necessary to print almost one hundred pages of tables containing the results of the censuses of 1810, 1840, 1850, and 1860, especially as only slight reference is made to them in the text.

The study is a careful, able, and scholarly piece of work, which supplements admirably the recent *History of Manufactures* by Victor S. Clark. The further work to be done in this field must now consist of more intensive studies of particular industries, of which there exist already a few excellent ones, or of particular localities and periods. It is to be hoped Professor Tryon may find opportunity to exploit this field still further.

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*The Food Problem.* By VERNON KELLOGG and ALONZO E. TAYLOR.

New York: Macmillan, 1917. 8vo, pp. 212. Price \$1.25 net.

It is difficult to think of a contribution to the literature of the war which, if well done, would prove more timely and valuable than a discussion of "the food problem." We all know that food must be saved, but amid the conflicting industrial and military tendencies about us the "what," the "why," and the "how" of saving present to the layman many enigmas. Not all of us as yet realize that saving is a matter of production as well as of consumption, and that our limited agricultural resources must be used in the production of the highest food value. An adequate treatment of the whole matter in its manifold aspects, presenting in general terms a "food policy," should prove valuable to the legislator who must pass upon many questions of food control; to the administrator, who is charged alike with organizing the habits of consumers and of producers of food; to the speaker, who must preach food conservation in the land; to the consumer, whose eternal appetite is at the bottom of the problem; and to the producer, who wishes to turn his labor and the properties of his soil into staple food products with the least waste. Under present conditions a skilful presentation of so complicated a matter would call for congratulation to the authors for an invaluable service rendered the country. On the contrary an inadequate and bungling treatment merits the severest condemnation; for in the current crisis even heroic work, if ill-advised, cannot be excused under the catholic commendation of all things which are well meant.

We can thank Mr. Kellogg and Mr. Taylor for having seen something of the importance of the problem and for addressing themselves to it. In a matter of such grave concern our first inquiry must be the competence of the authors for the delicate and particular task in hand. This is vouched by the title-page of the volume which sets forth that Mr. Kellogg is a member "of the United States Food Administration, and the Commission for Relief in Belgium, and Professor in Stanford University, California," and that Mr. Taylor is a member "of the United States Food Administration, and Exports Administrative Board, and Professor in the University of Pennsylvania." This guarantee of adaptability to the task is countersigned by Mr. Herbert Hoover, "United States Food Administrator, and Chairman of the Commission for Relief in Belgium," who contributes a preface. The indefiniteness of the professorial competence is dispelled by "Who's Who in America," which unhesitatingly pronounces Mr. Kellogg a zoölogist and Mr. Taylor a physical chemist.

How well their special researches have fitted them for solving the problem of the reorganization of the production and consumption of food is best attested by the volume itself. It begins with a short Introduction and closes with a brief Conclusion. The 209 pages which "fill" between are devoted to two extended discussions. The first of these is concerned with "The Problem and Its Solution" and includes chapters upon "The Food Situation of the Western Allies and the United States," "Food Administration," "How France, England, and Italy are Controlling and Saving Food," and "Food Control in Germany and Its Lessons." The second chapter, seemingly superfluous inasmuch as the problem has reached ultimate solution in the first, is given to a study of "The Technology of Food Use," to which discussions of the "physiology" and the "sociology" of nutrition are subordinate. It also contains a discussion of "Grain and Alcohol."

As one ventures into the volume its grievous shortcomings become increasingly apparent. In the first place the presentation of the food situation is inadequate and inconclusive. The basis for a clear-cut picture is lacking since there is no account of the tendencies in agricultural development in the several countries in the years immediately preceding the war. To cite illustrations, the fact that Germany's food production increased much faster than population during the thirty years ending in 1914, and the fact that by this date the staple foods exported by the United States had fallen to a small percentage of the national output, are absolutely essential to an understanding of the

situation. Yet all such facts are omitted. Nor does the volume contain anything which approaches an articulate statement of the conditions which accompany war and which tend cumulatively to decrease production. Again to illustrate, it is significant that fully one-quarter of the land cultivated in France in 1913 has been lost to French tillage, and that the productivity of the remainder has been decreased by fully 20 per cent. Yet facts of such manifest importance are overlooked and the conditions responsible for them receive not even cursory consideration. The authors content themselves with a few scattering and ill-arranged facts and figures which throw some light upon current conditions. But even these are not accurate, as will be attested by anyone who has checked through the statistics of current food production. In short by throwing together a few pieces of a cross-section they have tried to present a situation which is a stream of tendencies.

In the second place the volume betrays the authors' ignorance of the importance of the price aspects of the food problem. They know, to be sure, as many references will attest, that there are such things as prices, but apparently they have still to make the acquaintance of the price system. They seem quite unmindful that even in these days of exalted patriotism particular prices are still powerful incentives to economic conduct. More important still, they fail to realize the elementary fact that in any program for the regulation of consumption the scheme of prices is a piece of mechanism of the utmost importance and cannot be neglected with impunity. So far as prices are recognized the authors conclude that they are high (there is no conception of a price level), that this calls for lamentation throughout the land, and that something ought to be done about it. Evidently that something is to yank them down unceremoniously. Quite practically they would attempt to secure a larger surplus of food for the allies by lowering prices, thus, of course, discouraging production and encouraging consumption.

Fortunately, the United States Food Administration itself has not been equally oblivious to the importance of the price mechanism. As many of its actions clearly show, it recognizes that high prices are a stimulus to the production of the commodities whose supplies it wishes materially to increase. Unfortunately, however, even the Food Administration has not yet clearly realized that the way to encourage people to buy products whose food value is low is to increase their prices and through these stimulate the production of commodities which have far less food value than others which might be produced from the same elements. To criticize the authors in this connection one does not have to insist, as many economists doubtless would, that an attempt to keep prices down

is inconsistent with the larger objects of food administration. Experience and theory combine in indicating that, under adequate and well-considered supervision, prices may be kept down at least within limits without interfering with large production. But a policy which seeks so complicated an end imposes serious limitations upon the guidance exercised over economic conduct by the price system, and it is neither to be successfully formulated nor efficiently administered by one who does not appreciate the nature and complexity of the structure of prices and the function which it performs in the economic order.

In the third place, and most significant of all, the authors fail to grasp the real food problem. It cannot be too often repeated that military efficiency waits upon a reorganization of the resources of production. These resources, despite our extravagant ideas of their size, are limited. At the earliest possible stage of the productive process they must be diverted from the production of nonessentials to the production of essentials. Since the labor, materials, properties of the soil, and fertilizers out of which future food supplies must come are finite, they must be used to turn out those products which have the highest food values in proportion to the resources which they embody. In any food program the end must be commodities which satisfy the elementary pangs of hunger, not those which administer to the pecuniarily aesthetic taste of the dietetic dilettante. Perhaps this diversion cannot be accomplished by voluntary effort, certainly it cannot be effected by a regulation of consumption alone. But so far as a change of consumptive habits can be made to further it, people must be taught to demand products of relatively high food values. Certainly they must be dissuaded from purchasing goods whose food value is small in proportion to the resources embodied, for such buying causes prices to rise and tempts producers to use their resources in uneconomic ways. To this larger problem the authors are blind. In a passage which very nearly transcends the limitations of the prose medium which they employ, they exclaim, "Patriotism and food! Winning a world war by eating corn and chicken instead of wheat and beef!" This advice, quite characteristic of the teaching of the book, ignores the manifest facts that the barnyard now furnishes a very small part of the commercial supply of chickens, and that a chicken, in terms of industrial organization, represents a very wasteful process of converting potential food resources into actual food. So far as this and similar homilies can be understood it is upon the assumption that the authors believe that the war is to be won out of existing stocks of food.

An appraisal of the volume calls for no very recondite mathematical calculation. Upon obvious matters as, e.g., the economics of the clean

plate and the sociology of the garbage can, about which the wayfaring man need not err, it says the obvious and conventional things. Upon questions of real importance it is useless, and, one is almost inclined to say, vicious. It is unfortunate that an attempt to treat the food problem so ill conceived and so hastily done as this found its way into print. That it has appeared with the semiofficial indorsement of the Food Administration is a grave matter. It will prevent many, who otherwise would be critical, from exposing its many sins of omission and commission. Yet this indorsement makes all the more imperative the duty of the reviewer. In time of peace a book of this character would be laughed out of court or, better still, ignored entirely by students of the problem with which it deals. In time of war it is their duty to protect the public against its conclusions.

But all of this does not mean that the volume is valueless. Far from it. Its value resides not in the prosaic domain of throwing light upon current problems but in constituting a unique and valuable intellectual phenomenon. Who knows but some day an investigating committee will be appointed by Congress whose bias is not altogether anti-intellectual. They would find in this a curious example of what happens when two men, experts upon the biology and chemistry of nutrition, but unacquainted with the nature of the industrial order, set to work to turn out a plan for the reorganization of consumption and production to the end that the industrial system can accommodate itself to the imperative demands which the war is making upon it. Perhaps they would include it as "Exhibit X" in a comprehensive report explaining why we were so tardy in getting organized for war. If such a committee is not appointed some erudite scholar of the twenty-first century will find great pleasure in exposing it as a sample of the thought of an age which pretended to deal with its problems scientifically, but was so much under the spell of the superstition that science is a panacea that it allowed formulas for meeting an emergency problem in social organization to be magically juggled out of a test tube.

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*Poverty and Social Progress.* By MAURICE PARMELEE. New York: Macmillan, 1916. Pp. xv+417. \$1.75.

The purpose of this book as stated by the writer is "to give a comprehensive survey of the problems of poverty which shows the one-sided character of many of the explanations of its causation and which will at least furnish the starting-point for an effective program of prevention." The material is organized under three heads: Part I, Introduction;